



# MERCHISTON

Academic Results 2016-17

# A Message from the Headmaster...



Each term of an academic year sees paths or cross-currents of hope and pleasure. Indeed, strong rhythms run through a school year, and in the Summer Term, exam season, the 'green shoots' of the next cohort are already bursting through. For some pupils, the Merchiston journey stretches from the age of 7 to 18; others join us at later points in their schooling. Although every pupil who comes to Merchiston sits an entrance test, this does not mean that we are an ultra-selective school. Entrance tests depend on how high one sets the hurdle! However, I cannot stress enough how important it is to us that our aim that our pupils achieve the highest possible academic standards, is not just an aspiration but a reality. I often say to the many Merchiston audiences, that whilst revelling in the excellence of the sporting, musical and other numerous activities, we continue to emphasise the primacy of the classroom and that academic work is at the heart of the total curriculum.

Our commitment to the approach of learning and teaching adopted by the pupils and staff is central to our purpose. We endeavour to inspire the pupils to do the best they can possibly do. Indeed, this approach underpins the whole approach to education and our mantra 'Boys first'. Within the ethos and approach of the whole School, we concentrate upon the capacity of the partnership between the staff and the pupils within and outwith the classroom to 'dig that little deeper', to 'find that little bit extra' and that 'cutting edge'. As I frequently say, we are endeavouring to find that 'hidden nugget' of ability in each young person.



Yes, education at Merchiston exists to instil confidence and competence, driven forward by the belief that every single person is talented in some way or another. The journey is an adventure and a massive amount of fun! And yes, the Merchiston education must open doors for young people. It can do this in a number of ways, but in the current economic climate, there is none more important than providing them with the qualifications to pursue the career that they would like to. At present, there is a huge emphasis being placed on academic achievement. And yes, at the same time, we must remember that passing examinations is far more than mastering the 'passing a test' technique.

We aim to ensure that all of the pupils at Merchiston also show the qualities that are so critical to employers, namely: curiosity; a depth of knowledge (on its own, this is not sufficient and in any case, is readily available as a result of the proliferation of information technology); innovation and self-motivation; charm; discipline; hard work; politeness; an ability to be punctual; an interest in the job; skills such as teamwork; the management of time and work; and problem solving and oral confidence to make a case to persuade others of its validity. This is precisely what our 'total curriculum' tries to do. However, our 'total curriculum' sits in a complete vacuum unless the primacy of the classroom, and academic work, leads to each and every pupil gaining the best possible examination results.



It is my great pleasure to provide you in this leaflet with an update on the public examination results of the academic year 2016/17. These results, yet again, prove that the way forward is for pupils to work alongside the staff in being inspired and seeking further inspiration. It is my responsibility to try to ensure that every member of staff understands the importance of 'switching on the light bulbs' inside the head of every pupil at Merchiston. So, with every pupil's academic journey, we believe that the best direction we can provide is to care for the pupils; to inspire them and again, to try always to keep to the mantra 'Boys first'. I am absolutely delighted with the commitment of all the staff – whether this is in the Pringle Centre, putting the building blocks in place, or the staff in the Middle Years and the Sixth Form who lay on extra academic clinics in the afternoons and even on Sundays.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to visit Merchiston and spend time with us, and see first-hand how we nurture the learning of our pupils.

# Celebrating Merchiston's Impressive Academic Results

- 64% of successful applicants in 2017 went to UK Russell Group Universities, Bath, St Andrews and leading international institutions.
- 100% pass rate at A Level\*
- 14 pupils achieved a clean sweep of A\* and A grades at A Level
- 47% achieved at least one A\* or A grade at A Level
- 18 pupils achieved 9 or more A\*/A grades at GCSE
- 62% A\*/A pass rate at GCSE



*"We are enormously proud of our son and all that he has achieved – and been given the chance to achieve – whilst at Merchiston. His time here has been the making of him and we feel he could not have been better prepared for the next stage of his journey." Current Parent*

\*99.6% pass rate at A Level

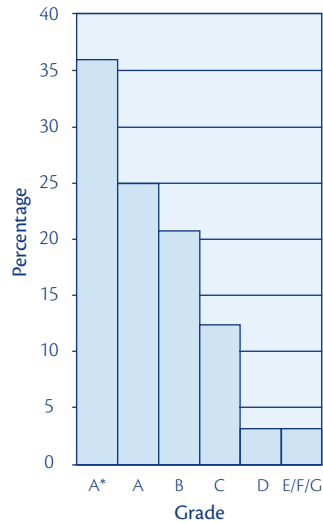
# GCSE Results

97% gained A\*-C grades

	No. Sitting	% A*-B	% A*-C	Average Points
2004	59	79	97	57.6
2005	70	78	97	60.4
2006	51	81	98	60.9
2007	60	84	98	56
2008	61	81	97	52.8
2009	63	89	98	58.4
2010	66	84	97	54.6
2011	73	89	98	50.48
2012	62	90	97	62.6
2013	71	86	95	66.4
2014	68	83	96	61.4
2015	73	89	98	51.6
2016	58	86	97	59.7
2017	75	82	94	55.2
Running Av	65	84	97	58

\*Average points calculated as follows: A\*=8, A=7, B=6, C=5, D=4, E=3, F=2, G=1

## GCSE Results 2017

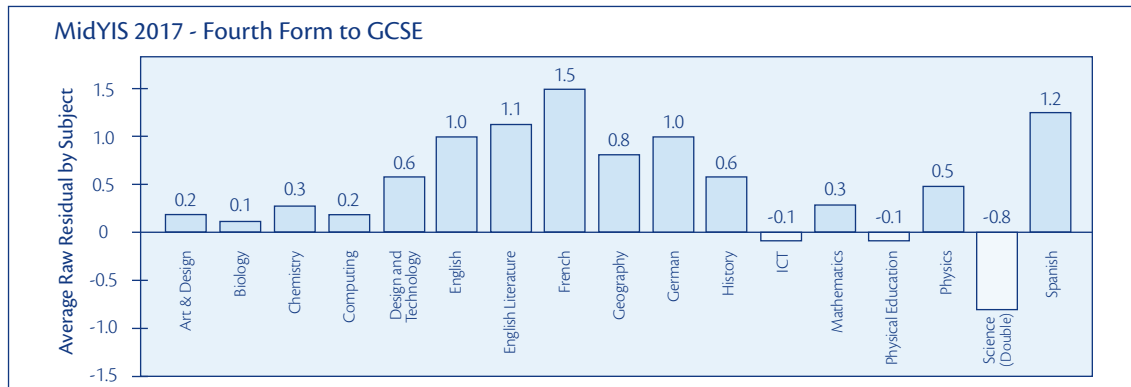


Total Papers Taken	629	
A* Grades	230	37%
A* + A Grades	387	62%
B Grades	128	20%
C Grades	74	12%
D Grades	21	3%
E Grades	8	1%
F Grades	11	2%
A* + A + B Grades	515	82%
Overall Pass Rate (A* - C)	589	94%

GCSE	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Pass (A* - C)	98%	97%	98%	97%	95%	96%	98%	97%	94%
A* Grades	29%	31%	28%	38%	30%	22%	37%	29%	37%
A Grades	39%	29%	31%	27%	31%	35%	33%	30%	25%
A*, A + B Grades	89%	84%	89%	90%	86%	83%	89%	86%	82%

3 Pupils obtained 10 A* and A
15 Pupils obtained 9 A* and A
3 Pupils obtained 8 A* and A
6 Pupils obtained 7 A* and A

MidYIS is a form of benchmarked national testing of pupils aged 13, used to predict GCSE grades. The chart below shows the 'value-added' between national expectations for individual pupils, and achievement at Merchiston.



MidYIS Year 9 2014/2015 to GCSE 2017 Final Analysis: Based on results received by CEM up to 03/11/2017.

# GCSE Results

Subject	No. of Candidates	A* (%)	A (%)	B (%)	C (%)	D (%)	E (%)	F/G (%)	Pass Rate A*- C (%)
Arabic	1	1 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
Art and Design	15	4 27%	4 27%	4 27%	1 7%	1 7%	1 7%	0 0%	87%
Biology	40	17 43%	6 15%	11 28%	4 10%	1 3%	1 3%	0 0%	95%
Chemistry	50	25 50%	8 16%	9 18%	4 8%	2 4%	1 2%	1 2%	92%
Chinese	17	13 76%	2 12%	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
Computing	7	0 0%	1 14%	5 71%	1 14%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
Design and Technology	26	1 4%	11 42%	6 23%	5 19%	1 4%	2 8%	0 0%	88%
Electronics	13	4 31%	2 15%	6 46%	0 0%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	92%
English Language	71	22 31%	32 45%	13 18%	4 6%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
English Literature	63	30 48%	24 38%	8 13%	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
ESOL	4	0 0%	1 25%	1 25%	2 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
French	10	6 60%	3 30%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
Geography	41	10 24%	11 27%	14 34%	3 7%	3 7%	0 0%	0 0%	93%
German	12	5 42%	1 8%	4 33%	1 8%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	92%
Greek	2	1 50%	1 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
History	41	11 27%	12 29%	11 27%	7 17%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
ICT	6	0 0%	2 33%	2 33%	1 17%	0 0%	1 17%	0 0%	83%
Latin	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
Mathematics	75	24 32%	16 21%	11 15%	22 29%	2 3%	0 0%	0 0%	97%
Physical Education	13	0 0%	1 8%	5 38%	6 46%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	92%
Physics	40	23 58%	8 20%	4 10%	2 5%	2 5%	0 0%	1 3%	93%
Russian	7	7 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	100%
Science (Double)	24	3 7%	6 13%	10 22%	10 22%	5 11%	2 4%	9 20%	64%
Spanish	20	14 70%	4 20%	1 5%	0 0%	1 5%	0 0%	0 0%	95%

# Academic Successes in External Competitions



Winner of the Gilbert Murray Essay Competition in June 2017



Winners of the Engineering Education Scheme in April 2017



Winner of the Intermediate Kangaroo Paper in May 2017



Winners of the UKMT Junior Maths Challenge in June 2017

The following is a small taster of numerous achievements gained in external school competitions.

## Chemistry

The following Chemistry successes were in challenging national competitions and the silver and gold awards are particularly strong achievements:

Upper Sixth RSC Olympiad: 1 silver, 3 bronze

Lower Sixth RSC Olympiad (C3L6 Cambridge Challenge): 1 gold, 1 silver, 5 bronze

## Classics

A Fourth Form pupil, was awarded a certificate of merit in the Gilbert Murray Essay Competition.

## Engineering

Engineering Education Scheme Scotland - Lower Sixth Team: Second Place, runners-up.

Rampaging Chariots - Shell and Sixth Form: Winners of the Autonomous category for senior students, Second in Assault Course event.

## Mathematics

**Senior Mathematics Challenge:** 13 gold, 14 silver, 9 bronze, 3 British Mathematics Olympiad qualifiers, 9 European Kangaroo qualifiers.

**Intermediate Mathematics Challenge:** 13 gold, 16 silver, 17 bronze, 1 Intermediate Mathematics Olympiad qualifier, 9 European Kangaroo qualifiers.

**Junior Mathematics Challenge:** 8 gold, 11 silver, 11 bronze, 2 Junior Olympiad qualifiers, 3 Junior Kangaroo qualifiers

As in the three previous years, we participated in the UKMT Senior Team and Junior Team Mathematics Challenges. Unfortunately, neither of our teams qualified among the first three teams this year, but participation served as very good experience for future competitions and the eight pupils involved gained plenty in terms of mathematical skills (during the preparation) and amusement on the day.

Following their success in the Intermediate Mathematics Challenge, four Fifth Form pupils were invited to participate in the UKMT Mathematical Circle in Edinburgh, a new enrichment event for around forty able young mathematicians, which took place in May. Furthermore, one Fourth Form pupil and one Shell pupil were invited by UKMT to attend the Mathematics Masterclass Day in Edinburgh in June.

## Physics

British Physics Olympiad (BPhO) Round 1: 3 bronze

AS Physics Challenge: 1 gold, 3 silver, 4 bronze

GCSE Physics Challenge: 2 silver, 11 bronze

# Scottish Higher and Advanced Higher Results

These results are for the small number of our boys who study Scottish Advanced Highers and Highers.

## Advanced Higher Results - Upper Sixth

Subject	No. of Candidates	A (%)	B (%)	C (%)	D (%)	F (%)	Pass Rate A - C (%)
Mandarin	2	2 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%
Music	1	0 0%	1 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 100%

## Higher Results - Upper Sixth

Subject	No. of Candidates	A (%)	B (%)	C (%)	D (%)	F (%)	Pass Rate A - C (%)
Biology	4	3 75%	1 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4 100%
Chemistry	4	3 75%	1 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4 100%
Economics	5	3 60%	2 40%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5 100%
Mathematics	4	1 25%	2 50%	1 25%	0 0%	0 0%	4 100%
Physical Education	2	1 50%	1 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%
Physics	2	0 0%	1 50%	1 50%	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%

## SQA Results Achieved by Lower Sixth Pupils

Subject	No. of Candidates	A (%)	B (%)	C (%)	D (%)	F (%)	Pass Rate A - C (%)
Higher Mandarin	5	5 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5 100%
Higher Music	2	2 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%

*“We place significant trust in Merchiston when recommending it as an outstanding senior school option for boys. Former pupils who go on to Merchiston never fail to impress when they return to visit, either as senior school pupils or beyond school leaver age. Merchiston succeeds in stimulating, challenging and inspiring boys to achieve their potential and readies them for an ever changing and increasingly complex world.” Liam Harvey, Headmaster, St. Mary’s Melrose*

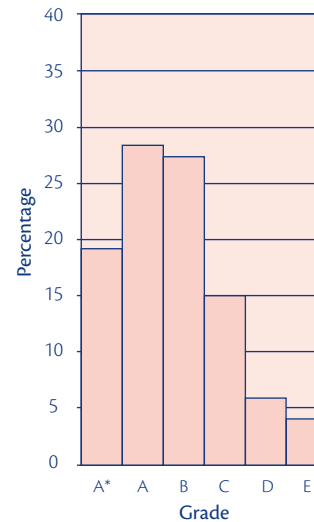
# A Level Results



47% achieved at least one A\*/A grade

	No. Sitting	%	% A - B	% Pass
2006	57		77	99
2007	68		79	100
2008	59		82	100
2009	74		80	100
		A* - A	A* - B	Pass
2010	64	58	80	100
2011	80	63	84	100
2012	77	56	82	100
2013	82	51	81	100
2014	77	54	81	100
2015	82	40	77	100
2016	68	42	77	99
2017	79	47	75	100
Running Av	72	51	80	100

A Level Results 2017



*"I would say how delighted I am with what Merchiston has done for my son over his five years there. His academic results – A\*A\*A – were beyond his (and my) expectations and he now goes off to Glasgow to study Politics as a well-rounded young man. Your School will always have the strongest of recommendations from me." Former Parent*

*"...these brainboxes snagged one of Scotland's highest percentages of A\*-B grades at A Level." Tatler School Guide 2018*



# A Level Results

Subject	No. of Candidates	A* (%)	A (%)	B (%)	C (%)	D (%)	E (%)	Fail (%)	Pass Rate A - E (%)
Art and Design	9	0 0%	3 33%	1 11%	3 33%	2 22%	0 0%	0 0%	9 100%
Biology	17	1 6%	4 24%	3 18%	7 41%	1 6%	1 6%	0 0%	17 100%
Chemistry	28	1 4%	3 11%	8 29%	6 21%	3 11%	6 21%	1 4%	27 96%
Chinese	9	0 0%	7 78%	2 22%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	9 100%
Classical Civilization	2	0 0%	1 50%	1 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%
Design and Technology	2	0 0%	0 0%	1 50%	1 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%
Economics	14	2 14%	6 43%	4 29%	2 14%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	14 100%
Electronics	3	0 0%	3 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 100%
English Literature	25	4 16%	6 24%	9 36%	6 24%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	25 100%
French	3	0 0%	1 33%	2 67%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 100%
Further Mathematics	13	5 38%	5 38%	2 15%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	13 100%
Geography	11	2 18%	2 18%	5 36%	1 18%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	11 100%
German	3	0 0%	1 33%	2 67%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 100%
Government and Politics	11	2 18%	1 9%	6 55%	0 0%	1 9%	1 9%	0 0%	11 100%
History	17	6 35%	4 24%	4 24%	2 12%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	17 100%
ICT	1	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 100%	0 0%	0 0%	1 100%
Latin	2	1 50%	1 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%
Mathematics	33	13 39%	9 27%	6 18%	1 3%	2 6%	2 6%	0 0%	33 100%
Physical Education	6	1 17%	2 33%	2 33%	1 17%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	6 100%
Physics	15	2 13%	4 27%	5 33%	2 13%	2 13%	0 0%	0 0%	15 100%
Religious Studies	5	2 40%	1 20%	1 20%	1 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5 100%
Russian	5	4 80%	1 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5 100%
Spanish	4	0 0%	2 50%	2 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4 100%

# A Level Results

Total Papers Taken	238	
A* Grades	46	19%
A Grades	67	28%
B Grades	66	28%
C Grades	34	14%
D Grades	14	6%
E Grades	10	4%
U Grades	1	0%
Total Passed	237	100%

A* Grades	19%
A Grades	28%
A* and A Grades	47%
A*, A, B Grades	75%
Overall Pass Rate	100%

A Levels	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Pass (A* - E)	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%
A* Grades					21%	24%	21%	19%	18%	12%	12%	19%
A Grades	36%	47%	44%	49%	36%	39%	35%	33%	36%	28%	31%	28%
A* and A Grades					57%	63%	56%	51%	54%	40%	43%	47%
A*, A and B Grades	77%	79%	82%	80%	81%	84%	81%	81%	81%	76%	77%	75%
A* - C Grades	95%	93%	95%	94%	95%	95%	96%	94%	96%	92%	94%	89%

The A\* grade was introduced for the examination series June 2010, therefore the statistics in the A\*, A and B Grades in the years 1999-2009 reflect the percentages for A and B Grades only.

*“Teachers in the Maths Department are not only flawless in teaching, but also good at being mentors! You all stunned me, as I had not come across any teacher like you in Hong Kong.” Former Pupil*

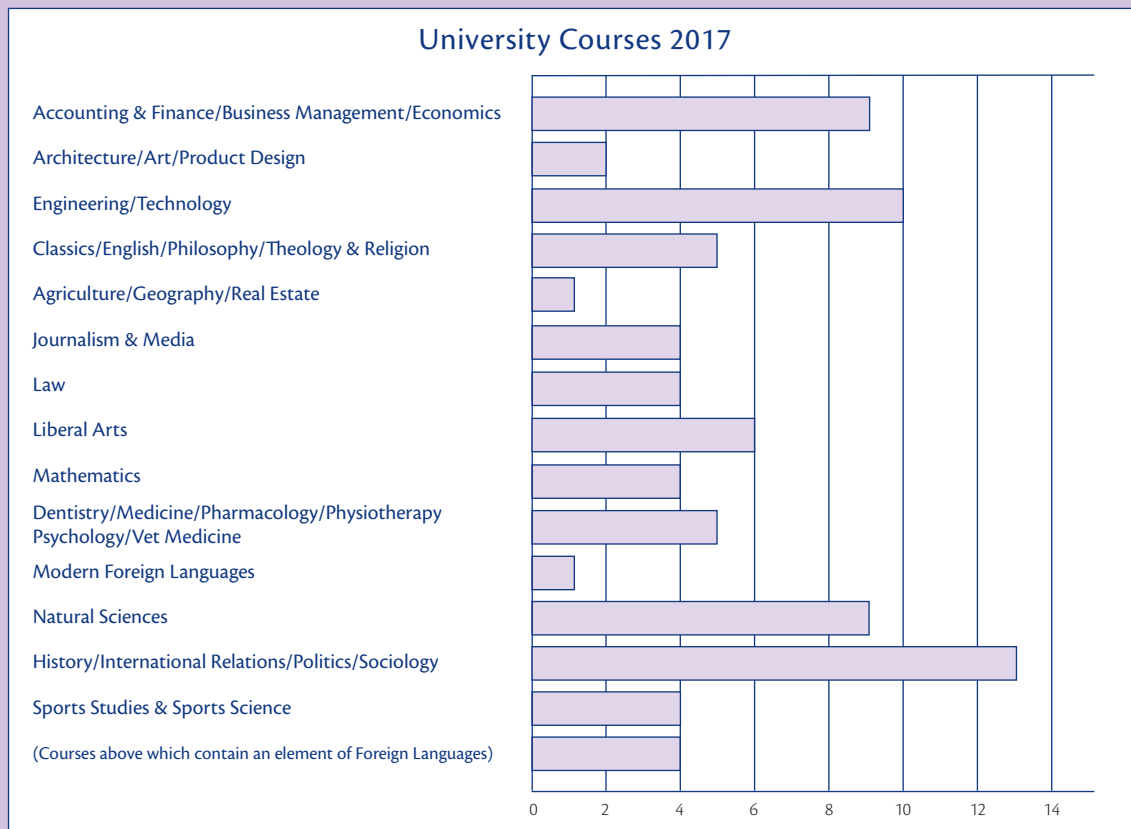
*“I’ve been impressed with the way that Merchiston has maintained its all-boys status and an environment where boys can be both nurtured and challenged. You’ve shown yourselves capable of getting the best of a wide range of abilities and have developed some fine young men.” Rob Taylor, Headmaster, Cargilfield*

# Moving On



## 73% of pupils gained entry to their first choice university

Many of this year's leavers will be taking up places at top UK universities – the destinations are shown on the following pages. Some of these pupils will be taking time away from their academic studies to experience living and working overseas as part of their gap year. Their careers at Merchiston prepare them well as they embark on their future study; we equip them not just with the results they require to follow their chosen path, but also with essential 'life skills'.



# University Destinations 2017



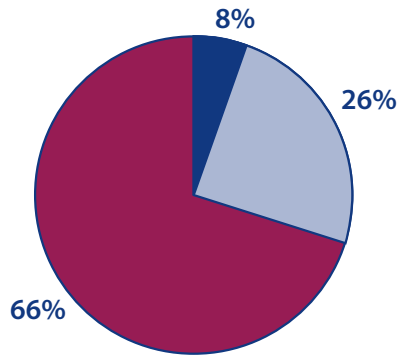
# Pupil Destinations 2017

<b>Scotland</b> Total going to university in Scotland 20 (26%)			
<b>Russell Group &amp; St Andrews Universities</b>	<b>No of Pupils</b>	<b>Universities</b>	<b>No of Pupils</b>
University of Edinburgh	5	Edinburgh Napier University	3
University of Glasgow	4	Heriot Watt University	2
University of St Andrews	1	Queen Margaret University	1
		University of Aberdeen	2
		University of the Highlands & Islands	1
		University of Strathclyde	1

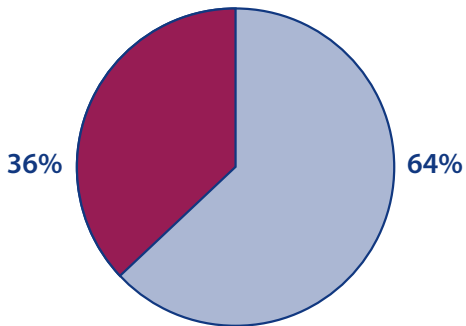
<b>England</b> Total going to university in England 51 (66%)			
<b>Russell Group &amp; Bath Universities</b>	<b>No of Pupils</b>	<b>Universities</b>	<b>No of Pupils</b>
Durham University	3	Brunel University	1
Imperial College London	2	Kingston University	1
Newcastle University	7	Loughborough College	1
University of Bath	2	Loughborough University	1
University College London	3	Manchester Metropolitan University	1
University of Cambridge	1	Northumbria University	2
University of Exeter	6	Nottingham Trent University	1
University of Nottingham	2	Oxford Brookes University	1
University of Oxford	3	Royal Holloway, University of London	1
University of Warwick	2	Swansea University	1
University of York	2	University of Essex	2
		University of Hull	1
		University of London	1
		University of Sunderland	2
		University of Westminster, London	1

<b>Other</b>	<b>No of Pupils</b>
Universities in America (including Ivy League, eg Cornell)	6
Number of pupils gaining places at Oxford and Cambridge	4
Percentage of successful applicants going to UK Russell Group Universities, Bath, St Andrews & leading international institutions	64%
Number of university applications submitted	77
Number of pupils gaining their first choice university	56
Percentage going to first choice university	73%
Number of pupils gaining their second choice university	7
Percentage going to second choice university	9%
Number of pupils entering clearing and gaining a place	14
Percentage going to first or second choice university	82%

# Pupil Destinations 2017



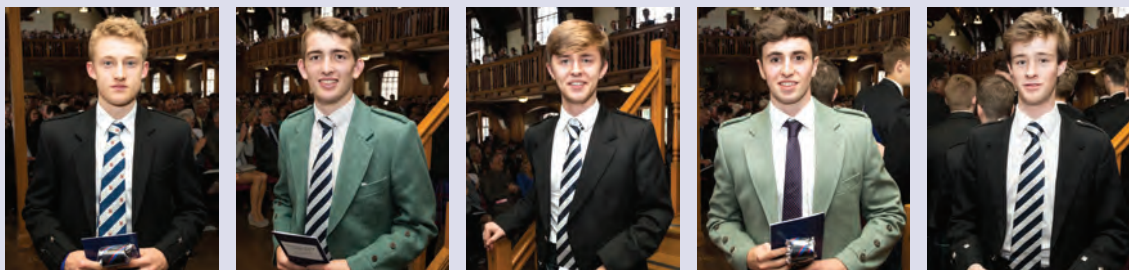
Number of university applications submitted:	77
Percentage of pupils gaining entry to their first choice university:	73%
Percentage of pupils gaining entry to their second choice university:	9%



Russell Group Universities, Bath & St Andrews	
Durham University	University of Exeter
Imperial College London	University of Glasgow
Newcastle University	University of Nottingham
University of Bath	University of Oxford
University of Cambridge	University of St Andrews
University College London	University of Warwick
University of Edinburgh	University of York

*"A balanced curriculum, excellent pastoral care and a high A Level pass rate make Merchiston one of the UK's leading independent schools." [www.ukboardingschools.com](http://www.ukboardingschools.com)*

# Recent Leavers with Places at Selected Universities



**2017** Cameron B, Mathematics and Statistics – Jesus College, Oxford  
Ryan D, PPE (Philosophy, Politics and Economics) – St Anne’s College, Oxford  
William H, History – Merton College, Oxford

Andrew J, English – Pembroke College, Cambridge

Alasdair B, Medicine – University of Edinburgh  
Jamie H, Mathematics – University of Edinburgh  
Ryan L, Psychology – University of Edinburgh  
Joshua Z, Mathematics – University of Edinburgh  
Joseph G, Scottish History – University of Edinburgh  
Kaleb M, Politics – University of Glasgow  
Alasdair N, Physics – University of St Andrews

Dave H, Aeronautical Engineering – Imperial College London  
Angus P, Mathematics – Imperial College London  
Tyler A, Computer Science – University College London  
Mark F, Chemistry with Management Studies – University College London  
Colm M, Electrical and Electronic Engineering – University College London  
Denis B, Engineering – University of Warwick  
Oliver K, Philosophy, Politics and Economics – University of Warwick

**2016** Kirill C, Computer Science and Mathematics – Balliol College, Oxford  
(accepted a place at Cornell Institute of Technology)  
Mateusz D, Fine Art – Magdalene College, Oxford  
Aled E, Spanish (Modern Languages) with Linguistics – Trinity College, Oxford

Junyeob K, Engineering – Trinity College, Cambridge  
Daniel M, Veterinary Medicine – Robinson College, Cambridge (accepted a place at Edinburgh University)

Rory M, International Relations – University of St Andrews  
Calum M, International Relations - SOAS, University of London  
Duncan D, Chemical Physics - Bristol

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